THE NEW INDIAN EXPRESS

BENGALURU • WEDNESDAY • APRIL 22, 2026 • ₹9.00 • PAGES 20 • LATE CITY EDITION

READ SHARE FOLLOW
newindianexpress.com
facebook.com/thenewindianxpress twitter.com/newindianxpress
instagram.com/newindianexpress

TIM COOK TO STEP DOWN AS APPLE CEO, TRANSITION TO EXECUTIVE CHAIRMAN

After 15 years at the helm, Apple CEO Tim Cook will leave the job he inherited from late Steve Jobs and assume the role of executive chairman on Sept 1

HARDWARE BOSS JOHN TERNUS TO BE NEW CEO

Cook, 65, will turn the CEO duties to 51-year-old John Ternus, Apple's head of hardware engineering. Ternus is taking over at a challenging time when AI is disrupting traditional markets and US-China trade tensions remain a threat to business. Cook will work with Ternus to help him with "certain aspects of the company, including engaging with policymakers around the world"

LEVINSON TO QUIT NON-EXECUTIVE CHAIR ROLE

- To allow Cook to assume his new job, Arthur Levinson will relinquish his role as non-executive chairman while remaining on Apple board
- Cook's stepping down as chief executive and taking over as executive chairman is similar to the transitions made by Amazon's Jeff Bezos and Netflix's Reed Hastings after they ended their successful tenures

$350 MN

APPLE'S VALUATION WHEN TIM COOK TOOK OVER AS CEO IN 2011; IT'S $4 TRILLION TODAY

CHENNAI ▪ MADURAI ▪ VIJAYAWADA ▪ BENGALURU ▪ KOCHI ▪ HYDERABAD ▪ VISAKHAPATNAM ▪ COIMBATORE ▪ KOZHIKODE ▪ THIRUVANANTHAPURAM ▪ BELAGAVI ▪ BHUBANESWAR ▪ SHIVAMOGGA ▪ MANGALURU ▪ TIRUPATI ▪ TIRUCHY ▪ TIRUNELVELI ▪ SAMBALPUR ▪ HUBBALLI ▪ DHARMAPURI ▪ KOTTAYAM ▪ KANNUR ▪ VILLUPURAM ▪ KOLLAM ▪ TADEPALLIGUDEM ▪ NAGAPATTINAM ▪ THRISSUR ▪ KALABURAGI

Spectre of war again as peace talks elusive

Trump says he would rather go to war than extend the ceasefire; Iran refuses to relent

AGENCIES @ Washington/Tehran/Islamabad

AFTER a brief lull, Gulf countries are bracing for renewed airstrikes as the two-week ceasefire between Iran and the US is set to expire on Wednesday and the suspense over the proposed second round of peace talks continues.

Pakistan's information minister Attaullah Tarar said that as of Tuesday evening, Iran was yet to send a formal response regarding its participation in the peace talks, to be held in Islamabad. A US team led by Vice President J D Vance was scheduled to leave for Pakistan on Tuesday morning, but delayed the departure following Iran's public comments that it was not interested in holding any more talks with the US.

Late on Monday night, CNN reported that Vance's trip to Pakistan is "on hold".

President Donald Trump, who announced the second round of peace talks, on Tuesday warned that he would rather go back to war than extend the ceasefire, which ends at 4.50 am PST Wednesday.

DAY 53 | WAR WATCH

Iran also hardened its stance with parliamentary speaker and chief negotiator Mohammad Bagher Ghalibaf saying Tehran cannot enter negotiations "under the shadow of threats". He also claimed that if the war resumes, then Iran will deploy some new, surprise weapons.

Islamabad, the proposed venue of the peace talks, is under tight security cover. Over 10,000 personnel have been deployed for protecting foreign delegates. Some reports said security teams from both the US and Iran are already in the Pakistani capital to oversee preparations.

Meanwhile, Trump dropped hints that he may address some of Iran's concerns. "They have to negotiate... If they make a deal, they can make themselves into a strong nation again, a wonderful nation again," he said in an interview to CNBC. P12

Free 8 women on death row, Don tells Iran

Trump on Tuesday requested Iran to release the eight women awaiting execution, ahead of the proposed peace talks. "Please do them no harm! Would be a great start to our negotiations!!!" he wrote on Social Truth, taking a remarkably softer tone than in his usual posts

Trump misled by fake news, says Iran

Iran denied that the eight women face execution. "Trump was misled by fake news," Iranian judiciary's official Mizan Online website said. "Some of the women have been released. Others face charges that, if convictions are upheld, would at most result in imprisonment."

Woman invites BF home, sets him afire

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE
@Bengaluru

IN a horrific incident, a 27-year-old man was set ablaze allegedly by his girlfriend after she felt he was ignoring her. The woman allegedly tied the victim's hands and blindfolded him before pouring petrol and kerosene on him and setting him on fire at her residence in Anjana Nagar in the Byadarahalli police limits on Tuesday afternoon. The woman, who has been taken into custody, initially tried to hoodwink the police by cooking up a suicide story.

The deceased, Kiran, was from Chikkanayakanahalli in Tumakuru, while the accused, Prema (27), stays in Anjana Nagar. They had been in contact for the past one year and were in a relationship for the last six months. Both worked as sales executives at a telecom store near Bashyam Circle in Rajajinagar.

Victim Kiran (27)

Accused Prema (27)

The police said the incident occurred between 1.30 pm and 1.45 pm on Tuesday. They suspect that she had planned the murder as she felt Kiran was ignoring her.

A police source said that the preliminary investigation revealed that Prema suspected Kiran of having an affair and ignoring her, which had caused frequent quarrels between them. Around 1 pm on Tuesday, she allegedly called him to her house when her mother and brother had gone to work. She then insisted on spending some intimate moments. She tied his hands, blindfolded him, and gagged him with a cloth.

"To avoid suspicion, she also undressed herself before pouring a petrol and kerosene mixed liquid on him and setting him ablaze," the source said, adding that the incident may have been recorded on her phone.

DCP (North-West) DL Nagesh said the police are examining and analysing the crime scene, including whether the incident was recorded on her phone. The body has been sent for the postmortem. The accused has been taken into police custody.

> **CCTV footage was checked and it was established that Kiran was not carrying petrol when he entered the house. Prema confessed that she had brought petrol and kerosene as she had decided to finish him off**
>
> — Police sources

Marks on victim's wrists raised suspicion, say cops

Prema initially portrayed the murder as a suicide. But after analysing the crime scene, the police noticed marks on the wrists of the deceased, raising suspicion. The woman claimed that Kiran took the extreme step when she was in the bathroom and she rushed out hearing his screams. The neighbours had also alerted the fire department following which a fire tender was pressed into service.

"As there were inconsistencies in her statement, CCTV footage was checked and it was established that Kiran was not carrying petrol when he entered the house. Upon thorough questioning, Prema confessed and revealed that she had brought petrol and kerosene in advance as she had decided to finish him off," the source said, adding that her mobile phone has been seized as part of the probe.

CONG GAMBIT

Address to the nation draws privilege notice

PREETHA NAIR @ New Delhi

AMID an escalating tussle over the women's quota bill and delimitation, the Congress on Tuesday submitted a privilege notice against Prime Minister Narendra Modi to Lok Sabha Speaker Om Birla, alleging that the prime minister committed a breach of privilege during his address to the nation last week by "casting aspersions" on members of the Lower House.

In the notice submitted under Rule 222, Congress MP K C Venugopal urged the Speaker to take immediate and decisive steps to uphold the sanctity of Parliament and the constitutional protections afforded to its members.

He said on April 18, the prime minister addressed the nation on TV following the defeat of the Constitution (131st Amendment) Bill. 2026 in the Lok Sabha on April 17, which failed to secure the required two-thirds majority. In the 29-minute speech, Modi criticised the blocking of the bill, made direct reflections on the voting pattern of members of the Opposition and attributed motives to them, he said.

It is well established that casting reflections, aspersions, and imputing motives to MPs regarding speeches in Parliament is tantamount to gross breach of privilege and contempt of the House, he added.

"Addressing the nation by the PM on the government not being able to muster the requisite majority in Parliament for criticizing the Opposition parties is unprecedented, which is unethical and a blatant abuse of power," Venugopal alleged in his notice.

Kharge calls PM Modi 'terrorist', then denies it

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE
@ Chennai, Kalaburagi

CONGRESS president Mallikarjun Kharge on Tuesday termed Prime Minister Narendra Modi a "terrorist" for using central investigative agencies like ED, CBI and I-T department to terrorise, intimidate and threaten opposition parties and public servants.

"He terrorises political parties and people through ED, CBI and IT department. It is on this basis that I call Prime Minister Modi a terrorist, not in a personal sense," Kharge said at a press conference in Guindy, accompanied by AICC General Secretary KC Venugopal.

Later in Kalaburagi, Kharge said he had not called Modi a terrorist. "I only said that the Prime Minister is creating fear among politicians and candidates of opposition parties. Tax terrorism is happening, ED is conducting raids, income tax department is conducting raids, CBI is conducting raids. This terrorism is being facilitated by the Prime Minister. He is doing it to silence opposition parties through raids and trying to defeat them in elections. That was what I said in Chennai," Kharge clarified.

He also accused the Election Commission of functioning like an expanded office of BJP, and stated that it had remained silent even as Modi violated the model code of conduct by releasing a video during the poll period. BJP SLAMS KHARGE: P4

DISRUPTION IN WEBCASTING

ECI CRACKS WHIP ON FOUL PLAY

MUKESH RANJAN @ New Delhi

AHEAD of polling in Tamil Nadu and West Bengal, the Election Commission of India read the riot act to all poll officials to ensure the process is free and fair. Since the entire exercise would be monitored through webcasting, even a brief disruption, such as a camera going offline for a few seconds or a technical glitch, could lead to re-poll being ordered, the panel warned.

"To prevent irregularities and violence, several measures have been implemented, including the large-scale deployment of paramilitary forces," a senior ECI official said.

The commission is also on high alert to curb booth capturing and fake voting, the officials said, adding that during webcasting, even a brief disruption, such as a camera going offline for a second or any technical glitch could lead to a re-poll being ordered by the authorities.

"If the ECI still finds that malpractice has not been effectively controlled, it may even withhold the results for the entire legislative assembly," another ECI official said.

EXPRESS READ

K'taka CET centres to have dress code officers

Bengaluru: The Karnataka Examinations Authority has for the first time deputed a dress code officer for each exam centre for the Common Entrance Test (CET) to be held on on Thursday and Friday. In all, 745 such officers have been deputed across the state to avoid confusion among students | P5

Pahalgam anniv: Pak extends airspace closure

New Delhi: With a year of reciprocal airspace closure between India and Pakistan after the Pahalgam terror attacks, Pakistan on Tuesday said it would extend the restriction until May 24. India is expected to respond with a similar move soon. the Pakistan Airport Authority announced the decision through a fresh Notice to Airmen | P9

Court tells cops to file FIR against Dr G for betting

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE
@ Bengaluru

THE 42nd ACJM court on Tuesday directed the Kodigehalli police in Madhugiri taluk of Tumakuru district to file an FIR against Home Minister Dr G Parameshwara and Tumakuru Deputy Commissioner Subha Kalyan for allegedly indulging in betting on a kabaddi match. Judge KN Shivakumar instructed the police to conduct an investigation into the allegation.

HR Nagabhushan of Madhugiri had moved the court with a PCR, alleging that the accused had indulged in betting, which is against the law.

During the final of the state-level kabaddi tournament for pre-university college students held in Tumakuru on October 19, 2025, Sunday, Parameshwara had reportedly stated that he had lost a Rs 500 bet to the DC.

In the final of the boys' category , the Dakshina Kannada and Vijayapura teams faced each other. The Dakshina Kannada team defeated Vijayapura by 36-26 points. While distributing the awards, Parameshwara said, "I lost Rs 500 which I had bet with the DC that the Vijayapura team would win."

Taking note, the complainant approached the police to get an FIR filed against the minister and the DC but in vain. Following which he moved the court.

ON THE BOIL

Security personnel lob tear gas shells to disperse a mob advancing towards the BDO office in Thoubal district of Manipur on Tuesday, where Chief Minister Y Khemchand Singh's event was scheduled. One person sustained bullet wounds in the firing | PTI

13 die in Kerala firecracker unit blast

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE
@ Thrissur

AT least 13 workers were killed and over 13 injured — five of them critically — after a powerful explosion ripped through a firecracker-manufacturing unit set up in a paddy field at Mundathicode in Thrissur district on Tuesday.

The facility was engaged in preparing firecrackers for Thiruvambady devaswom ahead of the Thrissur Pooram scheduled this Sunday.

The unit, comprising makeshift sheds, was flattened in the blast leaving behind widespread devastation across the dry fields where temporary structures were erected as part of festival preparations.

Injured being taken to hospital | EXPRESS

Nearly 40 labourers were present at the unit when the explosion occurred around 3 pm.

The impact was so intense that nearby residents initially mistook it for an earthquake.

Sources said nearly 2,000 kg of explosive materials were stored at the facility. The initial blast triggered a series of secondary explosions, sending unexploded firecrackers flying into surrounding fields and hampering rescue efforts.

Fire and rescue personnel were forced to operate from a distance for hours as intermittent explosions continued. Unable to immediately access the site, they sprayed water while waiting for the blasts to subside before moving in.

Prime Minister Narendra Modi expressed grief over the loss of lives and announced an ex-gratia of ₹2 lakh each for the families of the deceased and ₹50,000 for the injured.

FORWARD TRAINING NODE

Army's skill lab where soldiers learn how to win the drone war

JAVARIA RANA @ Bhuj

COMPUTER screens display simulated terrain, moving targets and live telemetry as young soldiers pilot virtual drones through obstacle-heavy scenarios that resemble a video game, but are configured to replicate combat conditions.

This newspaper visited one such forward training node on the western front, part of the Army's post-Operation Sindoor push to build its next generation of unmanned aerial vehicle (UAV) operators.

Drones, once limited to intelligence, surveillance and reconnaissance (ISR) roles, are now central to battlefield operations, delivering low-cost surveillance and precision strikes while compressing decision timelines.

During Operation Sindoor, Army units deployed UAVs for surveillance, targeting and loitering munition strikes, allowing tactical formations to generate a real-time battlefield picture with reduced dependence on higher headquarters.

The Army began setting up these labs about two years ago across infantry formations and independent brigades to standardise training and build a steady pipeline of operators.

Soldiers operate an FPV drone through an obstacle course during training at an Army drone lab | JAVARIA RANA

"We follow the Directorate General of Aeronautical Quality Assurance (DGQA) protocols and train in phases, starting on simulators before moving to live systems," a Colonel overseeing the node told this newspaper.

Training begins on simulators using homegrown software to familiarise personnel with controls, mission scenarios and emergency handling, before they transition to live platforms. "It may look like a video game, but the focus is on building muscle memory and decision-making under pressure," the officer said.

After completing the required flying hours, soldiers undergo structured training followed by hands-on exposure across a spectrum of systems, from micro UAVs used for close reconnaissance to first-person view (FPV) drones and loitering munitions.

The modules cover mission planning, payload integration and operations in contested environments, including scenarios involving signal disruption and electronic interference. In the next stage, obstacle courses are used to rigorously test control, manoeuvrability and responsiveness in constrained, high-pressure settings. Those who perform well are taken on for advanced pilot and instructor roles. Each lab can run up to 40 courses annually and, when required, also trains Border Security Force (BSF) personnel as part of inter-agency coordination to counter cross-border drone activity.

The training pipeline now feeds directly into operational units. In the infantry, each unit is being equipped with 'Ashni' platoons carrying surveillance UAVs and loitering munitions for tactical ISR and strike roles. In artillery, 'Divyastra' batteries integrate UAV-based targeting with guns, while 'Shaktibaan' regiments are tasked with long-range precision strikes using swarm drones and remotely piloted aircraft systems.